

Appl. No. 10/528,494
Amdt. Date: 01/23/2008
Reply to Office Action of August 23, 2007

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This response is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action mailed August 23, 2007 in the above-captioned application.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Biewer (3,837,309). Reconsideration is respectfully requested. It is believed that the claims remaining in the application are patentably distinguishable over the cited reference for the reasons hereinafter set forth.

An anticipating reference must disclose each and every element of the claimed invention. Biewer, however fails to teach, show or suggest removable buoyancy means temporarily mounted on the distal ends of pontoons extending radially outwardly from a central column of a floating platform. The Examiner contends that the buoys (26) of Biewer comprise temporary buoyancy means and that the buoys (26) are removable via a hinge (28). Applicant respectfully disagrees. The buoys (26) of Biewer are not removable elements of the floating platform (20) nor does Biewer disclose that the buoys (26) may be removed or are intended to be removed. The buoys (26) are part of the ballast system of the floating platform (20) (column 5, line 67 through column 6, line 2 and lines 52-53). The coupling (28) is not a hinge nor does it function as a hinge. Rather the coupling (28) provides for swivable movement of the buoys (26) relative to the lower hull of the platform (20) and, as shown in Fig. 2, float on the water surface when deballasted.

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With regard to claim 5, it is respectfully submitted that the installation method of Biewer does not teach, show or suggest the method step of claim 5 as amended herein. Biewer does not disclose the steps of: a) providing a platform with removable ballast tanks; b) securing one or more winches on the upper ends of the ballast tanks; c) positioning the platform over pre-installed tendons; d) connecting winch lines to the tendons; e) activating the winches and pulling upwardly on the tendons to develop an initial tendon pre-tension; f) locking the tendons to the platform; g) deballasting the platform to develop the tendon pre-tension at the installation draft; and h) removing the winches and ballast tanks from the platform. Rather, when the platform of Biewer is in situ and made ready for working, the tanks (24) and buoys (26) are ballasted to submerge the lower hull (22) of the platform. The buoys are not removed nor are they intended to be removed from the platform after the platform (20) is made ready for working. It is believed therefore that the rejection of claims 1, 2, 5 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is not proper and it is respectfully requested that it be withdrawn.

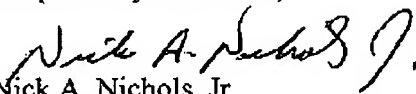
Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 3 and 6 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Biewer in view of Husvik et al. (6,022,174). Claim 6 has been canceled herein. For the reasons set forth above, it is believed that Biewer fails to teach, show or suggest the Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 1 and 5, the remaining independent claims in the application, which claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Consequently, the claims depending therefrom are also in condition for allowance.

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Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,


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